

the couch up to the fourth floor and shoved the ugly worn out piece of furniture against the wall opposite the delapidated television set with the dusty screen. then i remember he handed me a glass of pink lemonade and we sat drinking as the television began to warm up. when the picture came on all it consisted of was a naked light bulb burning, similar, i would have to say, to the fireplace scene they broadcast at christmas time. anyway, we sat sipping, watching, for quite some time. it was such a dreary, typical, drizzly gray dream, the kind that i am very familiar with. as i try to reconstruct what happened next in the dream i stare out the front window at the sofa, still soaking up the rain. perhaps tonight i will dream about the junk truck. in the rain a small child walks by, hands in pockets, hair drenched, completely ignoring the stuff my dreams are made of.

### SOLITAIRE

i could barely keep my eyes open, but when i felt myself falling off i quickly went out onto the porch to get some air to revive, since i knew what kind of dreams were waiting for me and i did not really have the courage to face them. on the porch on the wicker table there were cards strewn about, cards from the other night when we had played almost until dawn comically struggling to see who could accumulate senseless points. the cards were exactly as we had left them. she had won the game, and i remember having slapped down the remaining cards in my hand, and i see her cards there, neatly laid out, all the faces turned up, mostly kings and queens; those cards will most likely stay right there until the next time we play. i never was one for a game of solitaire. it's strange how this table is only suitable for playing cards, how these wicker chairs seemingly are uncomfortable for any other purpose. one night when i tried to write at this table i came away completely empty. but suddenly, spontaneously, entirely out of character, i take up the cards after pulling them together into a neat pile, and i begin to shuffle them intending to take a crack at solitaire, a game just a moment ago i renounced. i play one game, with no success, then another

with even less success, and then i start a third, slowly, snapping the cards down with determination and a sour bit of impatience. as i am nearing the end of this game i hear a creaking sound coming from inside of the house, and i know right away that my wife is stirring about, awakened no doubt by my force of play. she comes out onto the porch, standing there with dishevelled hair. at the tailend of a lengthy yawn she asks me how many games have i lost and whether i would care for any breakfast.

#### SEARCHING BREEZES THROUGH ME

when i get there on my bike in the last afternoon light there are not many people anymore at the fruit and vegetable stand. until christmas eve it will remain open selling trees and wreaths, working through halloween and thanksgiving, but for now it seems to be just surviving the chilly breezes of autumn. the produce has that old deep-colored soft appearance, which you would think would cause the stand to be very crowded, since all is so sensuous, so sweet and vulnerable right now. when i get there i find only the girl who usually works there, the girl with the bandage over her left eye. ever since i first started buying from this stand over a year ago i've seen that bandage over her eye and i've been tempted more than once to ask her why she has to wear it. but it is none of my business, of course, and besides she is always so friendly that i wouldn't like to see her composure change even a smidgen to have to explain something personal to me. one day, when i had brought my car, i bought a large basket of tomatoes and i remember being amazed at how scrupulously she went through the basket picking out tomatoes that were no good. her fingers moved with a tender precision that ran searching breezes through me.